

Being Different

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Summary: Being different isn't a crime. Pre-movie. One-shot. Happy Father's Day!

Being Different

**A/N: Gah! I could totally see Stoick doing this! What about you guys? **

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><p>What was going on with Hiccup? Stoick wondered to himself. He had been acting strange these past few weeks, acting depressed, and all of a sudden, it was like something he'd really needed to hear had been said to him: he walked out of the house that day with his lips pressed together and his head held high.<p>

Stoick was walking around upstairs to see if Hiccup had gotten back yet. That boy moved fast and silent, and if he had returned, Stoick would not know.

He came upon Hiccup's sketchbook, lying open on his bed.

There was a drawing of the most hideous creature splashed across the page: foot-long fangs and six arms, seven legs and gruesome eyes, five of them.

Stoick wondered what had caused Hiccup to draw something so ugly, until he looked closer at the monster.

Coming from its mouth were the words: "I'M NOT A MONSTER. I'M JUST DIFFERENT."

Stoick stared at the page for a second longer, then picked up his son's journal and began flicking through it.

On another page was an alien, even more hideous than the monster, and this one read: "BEING DIFFERENT ISN'T A CRIME."

Stoick found writing, instead of a drawing, on the page after that.

"What's wrong with me? Is being different wrong? If it isn't, why is Snotlout always making fun of me, and why won't the other kids let me play with them?"

Stoick's heart squeezed as he suddenly understood his son's angry drawings.

On the next page, it read: "IF DIFFERENT IS WRONG, DOES IT MAKE ME A BAD PERSON?"

Then another: "WHY DO PEOPLE MAKE FUN OF OTHERS?"

The lines became shorter, but more anger lurked in each and every letter and word on the page.

"IT HURTS."

Stoick finally stopped at a page entitled: "Dad."

"_Dad,"_ he read.

"_I know you won't ever read this, so I'm speaking freely. Dad, I want to say it's gotten bad. The other kids are always picking on me and they always have something mean to say. I so wish I could turn to you, but I know you'd just tell me being picked on is good for me and will succeed in toughening me up. Yeah, it would toughen up a Vikingâ€|just any other Viking except me." _

Stoick swallowed and kept reading.

"_Dad, it hurts, ok? It really, really hurts but you don't listen when I try to speak. Nobody listens, Dad."_

The letter ended there, but Stoick found many more in that old brown sketchpad.

By the time he'd finished the sixth, his hands were clenched into fists and he was trying very hard not to show emotion.

To think that Hiccup had been keeping such a deep river of pain inside for so longâ€|

Stoick pressed on farther and found a poem.

I had no idea the bullying was that bad, he thought. At that moment, he became aware of lithe, quick footsteps on the stairs. His son was coming in.

Before Stoick could even decide what to do and attempt to act accordingly, Hiccup had entered the room, looking dejected and nearly in tears.

Stoick noticed his face and clothes were splattered with mud and someone had written 'freak' in the thick liquid.

Stoick looked from the word to Hiccup, whose green eyes were wide. They had traveled the length of Stoick's beefy arm and had seen the notebook clutched in it.

He started backing out the door, his eyes searching for the doorknobâ€|

But within seconds, Stoick had flung the notebook aside and swept Hiccup into an embrace.

Stoick felt slightly hurt that Hiccup tensed beneath his touch, but reminded himself how long he had ignored his own son.

"You don'tâ€|you don'tâ€|" Hiccup hesitated. "You don't think I'm weak? Or that I need to man up?"

"Who did this?" His voice was dark with anger.

"Dadâ€|"

"Who did this?!"

"S-Snotloutâ€|"

"You leave that Snotlout boy to me," Stoick said grimly, thinking of the word 'freak' on his son's shirt.

* * *

><p>"What's this I hear about you making fun of my son?" Stoick demanded.<p>

"What?" Snotlout faked innocence. "I was just teasing and doesn't he need toâ€"manâ€|upâ€|Chiefâ€|" Snotlout faltered beneath Stoick's cold glare.

"I do not appreciate you mocking my son. One more word about his stature â€" or anything else that may displease you about him â€" and you will be put on limpet rations for a month. Is that clear?"

"Yes, sir," Snotlout muttered resentfully.

Stoick stomped away.

And for the next few weeks, he noticed his son seemed happier. Stoick made sure to pay him more attention than usual and Hiccup seemed to glow with delight whenever Stoick simply asked him how he was doing or wordlessly embraced him.

"You know, son," he said one day as they sat down to dinner together, "being different isn't a crime."

He slid Hiccup's journal across the table toward him.

Hiccup smiled. "I know."

* * *

><p>AN: Ok, so the cheese got a little out of control there

for a sec :P Anyway, I enjoy cheesy one shots between Hiccup and Stoick, actually anything cheesy, especially episode 8 of R.O.B but that got a little out of hand and by out of hand I mean cheesier than a double cheese pizza. **

**Seriously! Also, I was all like, 'I don't understand why Hiccup couldn't TALK things out with his father there!' I could understand the movie. In the movie, the angst was so thick it was nearly impossible to BREATHE let alone let the characters speak! **

End
file.